



# CRITICAL SKILLS PROGRAMME Newsletter



## Welcome to Issue 2 of the CSP Newsletter



Season's Greetings and welcome to this edition of the CSP newsletter from your four UK Programme Managers. This time of year is traditionally a time we associate with family and community. CSP practitioners form a UK-wide community from Orkney to Jersey, and from Middlesbrough to Merthyr Tydfil! Our newsletter is one way we can celebrate our achievements, successes and innovations. So if you have something that you would like to share, need support with your practice or would just like to network with the wider community, then we would love to hear from you. Our email addresses and contact numbers are below. Maggie, Jo, Pippa and Andrew



Pippa Leslie (England) - [pippa@criticalskills.co.uk](mailto:pippa@criticalskills.co.uk), 07799 831 849

Jo Morrison (England) - [jo@criticalskills.co.uk](mailto:jo@criticalskills.co.uk), 07702 360 363

Andrew Pearce (Wales) - [andrew@criticalskills.co.uk](mailto:andrew@criticalskills.co.uk), 0772 555 2093

Maggie Clark (Scotland) - [maggie@criticalskills.co.uk](mailto:maggie@criticalskills.co.uk), 07969 172 336



### Quote of the Week

***"Excellent, more please! Can't wait to get this into my form class and art room. Not to be just whole school policy but WORLD THINKING"***

***Philip Meredith, Aberdare Boys Comprehensive School, Wales***

### INSPECTOR DRAGGED BACK INTO THE CLASSROOM BY THE CHILDREN!

I teach a primary 6/7 class in a Primary School in East Ayrshire and I attended Critical Skills Training in April 2008. At the end of the first day of training, I got a phone call from my Head Teacher to notify me that HMle would be arriving soon. I had just 3 weeks to get some of the Critical Skills tools and techniques implemented in my classroom! Fortunately, I had a head start - having been an East Ayrshire probationer teacher a few years ago, I had already been introduced to some of the tools and had tried out a few of them, including full value contracts, community builders, working collaboratively, carousels and even a couple of group challenges - I just didn't know they were called 'Critical Skills'.

For the HMle visit, and with my training fresh in my mind, I made sure that I had planned a couple of group challenges, a carousel or two, some brainstorming, check-ins and a couple of community builders throughout the week. Of course the Inspectors never arrive in your classroom when you want them to and by Wednesday afternoon, they had visited me 3 times and hadn't seen one lesson using Critical Skills. I wasn't expecting them to return a fourth time.

However, I hadn't reckoned on the enthusiasm of the children. The Lead Inspector had taken some of my P7 pupils for interviews and had, unknown to me, gone around the displays in the classroom and asked them about their learning experiences. The pupils enthused about the various Critical Skills that they had experienced and told the Inspector that they had been disappointed that she hadn't observed any of them. They were so motivated by their group challenges, that they invited her back to the classroom on Thursday afternoon to observe the presentation of their products and the debrief process. She was taken aback by this but agreed to return to the class the next day. When she

arrived the children presented to her, with great enthusiasm, what they had been doing. We then went through the debrief process during which the children told me what I could do 'even better if' the next time. She was impressed! Children suggesting to the teacher how she could do her job better next time - wow!

The oral feedback I received from the Lead Inspector of the HMle team that evening was fantastic. She agreed that this was the way forward in teaching. In the written report, there were a few comments on the positive impact of Critical Skills including:

"Key strength: motivated pupils at the upper stages who were eager participants in their learning".

"Those in P6/P7 were highly motivated and worked well together on group challenges".

"At P6/P7 pupils developed effective collaborative and organizational skills through their planning, designing and making of their Pentecost Banner".

If you have an inspection looming, then I would encourage you to use as many Critical Skills tools as you can. In my experience, **HMle Inspectors love Critical Skills!**

**Gillian Sullivan - East Ayrshire**



# STOP PRESS!!!

## Critical Skills Open Training Events for 2009

Level 2 - 09-L2.3	26-28 January 2009 Elgin, Moray
Level 1A - 09-14A	4-6 February 2009
Level 1B - 09-14B	18-20 May 2009 Kings Manor, Edinburgh
Level 2 - 09-L2.6	25-27 March 2009 Midlands
Level 1A - 09-15A	30 March - 1 April 2009
Level 1B - 09-15B	1-3 June 2009 Midlands
Level 1A - 09-16A	29 June - 1 July 2009
Level 1B - 09-16B	7-9 October 2009 Manchester

If you would like further information or booking forms for the above institutes please contact:

**Marie Matty (England and Wales) on 01455 840066 or email [marie@criticalskills.co.uk](mailto:marie@criticalskills.co.uk) or Maria Hybszer (Scotland) on 07854 414512 or email [maria@criticalskills.co.uk](mailto:maria@criticalskills.co.uk)**

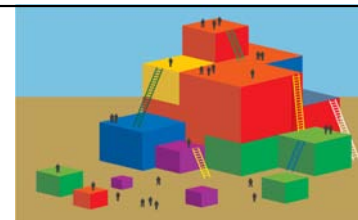
## POSTERS AND BOOKS FOR SALE!

Personal orders can be made online or by telephone with a credit or debit card via our distributors, Troubador Publishing Ltd, [www.troubador.co.uk/shop](http://www.troubador.co.uk/shop), 0116 255 9312.

Institutional orders should be made, with a purchase order, to Troubador Publishing Ltd, 9 De Montfort Mews, Leicester, LE1 7FW.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Price</b>
Level 1 Posters (full set of 15 up to date brand new posters)	£24.95 (inc VAT)
Critical Skills in the Early Years (written by Vicki Charlesworth)	£19.95
Leading the Learning School (written by Colin Weatherly)	£16.95
Transforming Teaching and Learning (written by Colin Weatherly with Bruce Bonney, John Kerr and Jo Morrison)	£16.95
Level 1 Coaching Kit (original USA version)	£19.95
Level 2 Coaching Kit (original USA version)	£19.95
K-3 Coaching Kit (original USA version)	£15.95
Tools for CSP Classroom (original USA version)	£15.95
Prices are exclusive of Postage and Packing	
Community Builder Pack	£12.95
<b>£10.00 if ordered before the 14 January 2009</b>	

## Community Builder



### Alliterative Names

#### Why Play it?

To help people remember other people's names.  
To develop concentration skills and FVC

#### How 2 Play:

Everyone sits in a circle

One person by introducing themselves by saying their name and adding a job that begins with the same sounds, e.g. 'Hello, I am John and I am a Juggler'. 'Hello, I am Christine and I grow Christmas Trees'.

The next person introduces themselves and the people that have already been introduced, e.g. Hello I am Steve the Swimmer, this is John and he's a Juggler and that is Christine and she grows Christmas trees.

Continue around the circle, the last person then has to say all of them!

#### Possible Debrief:

What did you have to know/do/be like to succeed at that?

How did you feel during that? Why did you feel like that?

How did you help others succeed?

Was it stressful for you? Why?

(in order to be successful, people need skills and attitudes, not just knowledge).

#### Y Not?

Often this is done choosing a word that represents you e.g. Jovial John, Punctual Pete, Clever Christine.

Have people write it on a card and stick it on themselves.

Make people think of an action to go with their word does this help people remember it more easily?

#### Notes:

Remind people of FVC, and that they need to be supportive and help people - some will find it easier than others.



### PHOTO OPPORTUNITY AND FEEDBACK!

We would love you to send us any stories or photos (with permissions) you have of Critical Skills in action at your school, so that we could use them for future newsletters or the website. Please send stories and photos to [marie@criticalskills.co.uk](mailto:marie@criticalskills.co.uk)

### New Website!

The new website will be launched very soon and will be an exciting development for the Community, with a number of advanced features, allowing a substantial amount of interaction. One of the first benefits is that the newsletter will be able to highlight longer and more substantial articles, too long to include in the newsletter itself by providing hotlinks back to relevant parts of the website. This will include new design ideas for specific situations developed by Programme Managers and our resident Consultants.